



# Highfield Residents Association

## SPRING NEWSLETTER 2024

HRA - representing the interests and concerns of Highfield

### Some words from the Chair

As most readers of the Newsletter will know, the City Council's Cabinet agreed on 16 January to institute a trial bus gate in Portswood Broadway between Westridge Road and St Denys Road during the hours of 7am to 10am and 4pm to 7pm. The trial will commence in January next year. It has been announced that the Council will form a Portswood Project Steering Group, broadly representative of local residents' groups, local business and other local interests.

The Steering Group will oversee the implementation and monitor the outcomes of the scheme, including co-design workshops, on behalf of the local community. It is expected to have several meetings between May this year and January 2025. I have been invited to chair the Group in an independent capacity; our Honorary Secretary, Barbara Claridge, has been nominated from HRA. Information bulletins will be issued after each meeting. There will in any case be further public consultation when the necessary Traffic Regulation Orders are made. Latest news of the Portswood Project has been published by the Council and can be viewed on the HRA website homepage

in Hot Topics and here:

<https://transport.southampton.gov.uk/portswood>

The Portswood Broadway scheme is probably the most contentious issue to have arisen in Highfield and Portswood for many years. Opinion has been sharply divided with probably a majority of local residents and business against the scheme but also with some support for it on environmental grounds. The question now is whether and how the scheme can be delivered in such a way as to maximise the potential benefits and minimise the potential detriments both to the local area and to the city more generally.

In the meantime, and as a preparation for the Co-design Workshops, HRA held its own event for members on 12 March. 39 HRA members took part supported by 8 Group Facilitators who were HRA members, friends of HRA or HRA committee members. 5 other HRA committee members supported the event. An Initial Summary Report has been produced and this will be followed by a full report in due course; both will be available on the HRA website.

*Professor Roger Brown*

### MEMBERS' DISCOUNT AT LOCAL SHOPS, BARS & SERVICES

**Bayleaf Kitchen** - 15% discount on food

**Baboo Ji Vegetarian Kitchen** - 10% discount on everything before 6.45pm and after 8.45 pm

**Brewhouse and Kitchen** - 10% discount on food and drink (only with food)

**Ceno Restaurant & Wine Bar** - 10% discount on food and drinks (only with food)

**Centenary Restaurant** - 10% discount on food, Mon-Thurs, **NEW!**

**Crown Inn** - 10% discount on food

**Figures Bookkeeping Services** - 10% discount on services. Email: [figuresbooks@outlook.com](mailto:figuresbooks@outlook.com) <http://www.figures-bookkeeping.co.uk/>

**Garden Restaurant** - 10% discount on food

**T. Greenslade Fresh Fish Ltd** - 10% discount on all locally caught fish Friday 9 am - 1pm, (opposite Waitrose)

**Innervision Hair and Beauty** - 10% discount on Tuesdays only

**Kohinoor of Kerala** - 10% discount on food (includes takeaways) **NEW!**

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**Mango Thai Tapas Bar & Restaurant** - 10% discount on food and 10% discount on 'Stand Up in Basement' monthly comedy nights at Mango Thai Tapas Ocean Village

**Muse Coffee Company Ltd** - 10% discount on hot drinks, 7am to 3pm Mon to Friday

**October Books** - 10% discount on books **NEW!**

**Pho Vietnam** - 10% discount on food and drink

**Scoops Ice Cream Parlour** - 10% discount

**Sing Noodles** - 10% discount on 'eat in' food

**Scraps Kitchen** - 10% discount on food (includes takeaways). Must book ahead on Friday and Saturday

**The Nest Coffee House** - 10% discount (Portswood and London Road branches)

**Trago Lounge** - 10% discount on tea/coffee/cakes, 9am to 4pm Monday to Friday

**Vibe Hair Salon** - 10% discount

**Viceroy** - 10% discount on food, Sunday to Thursday

**Woodies at the Junction Inn** - 15% discount on food & drink, (only with food), lunchtimes only, Monday to Friday

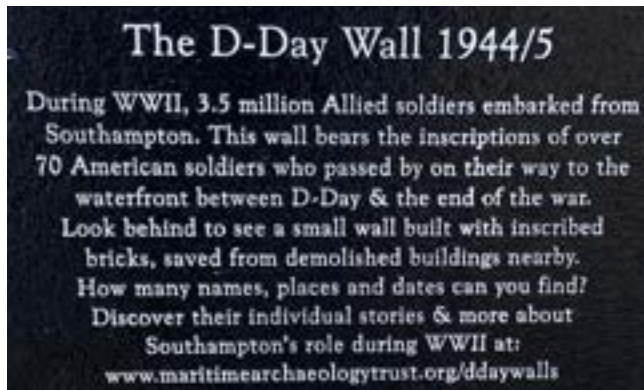
*\*Terms and conditions apply; members must present a valid HRA Membership Card*



**HIGHFIELD**  
Residents Association

## D-Day 80th Anniversary

Lines which show-up in the grass on The Common in dry weather, the occasional bricks poking through the grass, are some traces of military occupation. Eighty years ago The Common saw an immense build-up of troops, equipment and hardware in preparation for launching a major invasion of Europe. The lines in the grass are the outline of huts. Tanks, guns, vehicles and military equipment were stored in wooded areas, giving cover from aerial reconnaissance. Preparations started in 1943 readying the Docks to handle massive embarkation of troops and equipment. By early months of 1944 the build-up of American troops in and around Southampton had begun. Over two million American soldiers and their equipment were to pass through Southampton on the trip to France in the six months following D-Day, a major logistical achievement. One place they were housed was hutted and tented encampment our side of The Common, mainly north of Highfield Lane (where there'd been an American Army camp in WW1). Contemporary accounts speak of roads crowded with guns, tanks, bridging materials, ducks, jeeps and cranes in the days leading up to D-Day itself, 6 June, and of armed guards patrolling the barbed-wire



The 'D-Day Wall', lower end of Western Esplanade, Southampton

perimeter fence of the camp on The Common. Alongside Highfield Road was a hutted prisoner of war camp which, with increasing numbers as the invasion progressed, became one of the biggest in the South.

A postscript ....

By coincidence! A grand daughter of a German PoW, Penny Fellbrich,

has been in touch wanting to locate the camp where her Grandfather was held.

Some of you may remember the Echo reporting, in August 2007, her grandparents 60th wedding anniversary. Their marriage, in 1947, attracted press attention as the first after lifting of prohibition on UK citizens marrying PoWs. Post-war, PoWs were used in reconstruction work, and had to return to camp each night. It was 1948 before he was released and they could live together. He did not return to Germany but stayed here; they were living in Eastleigh at the time of their 60th anniversary.

She was enquiring whether there was a seat with a plaque commemorating her grandparents, but also wondered if there could be a 'heritage signage' recording the D-Day transit camp and prisoner of war camp here on The Common – an idea to explore?

*Graham Linecar*

## Introducing PC Adam O'Neill

Hello! My name is Constable Adam O'Neill, my full title is Community Engagement and Liaison Officer, Portswood I'm the Dedicated Neighbourhood Officer covering the Portswood, Swaythling, and Bassett Wards. I have 3 years experience in Southampton and I'm currently studying to obtain a Bachelor's Degree in Professional Policing Practice from the University of Portsmouth.

I firmly believe that good neighbourhood policing is a cornerstone of effective policing. It's all about building strong and trusting relationships with the community and I'm here to be your go-to person for everything community-related, offering support, advice,

and a listening ear for any non-urgent matters. Whether you have concerns, suggestions for some improvements, or simply a chat about how we can make our neighbourhood an even better place to live, I'm here for you. Please feel free to reach out to me directly at;

adam.oneill@hampshire.police.uk or 07929657079

Whilst I can assist with a wide range of community issues, please remember that I can't take crime reports through these channels, especially as I may be off duty. For crime reporting and to ensure you get the best possible service, kindly use the established channels by: calling 101, or online: <https://www.hampshire.police>.

*PC Adam O'Neill*

## Did you know .... Tweet Times on the Common

The nuthatch is a familiar bird to the Common - its a beautifully coloured bird, decked out in blue-grey above and rusty below. It lives in the tree canopies feeding on invertebrates in the summer and nuts and seeds in the winter. When organising a nesting hole the female nuthatch will reduce the size of the entrance with a thick wall of mud to discourage squatters! The greater spotted woodpecker and starling are the normal suspects.



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10% discount applied on production of an HRA membership card.

## Not all jam and Jerusalem!

If there is one thing lockdown has taught us, it is that we are sociable creatures, and one great way for women to come together is through the WI. Women in Common (the Highfield WI), has been holding its meetings in the Residents' Pavilion for 13 years. Why not join us if you are interested in meeting new people and learning something new, our door is always open! A typical evening might involve a speaker on subjects as diverse as wildlife gardening, wine-tasting, pasta-making or the treasures of the city art gallery – with social time and refreshments. Or we might have a more active session, a Pilates class or a singing lesson, for example. We also have quiz evenings and games, which provide great opportunities to make new connections with othermembers. We hold raffles and competitions (including cake-making, of course - we are, after all, the WI) and we have a thriving craft group. In the summer we like to get out and about, with guided walks and visits in the Southampton area.



Members can get involved in as much or as little as they like: we support national WI campaigns and local charities and in the coming year, we want to get more involved in supporting other community projects.

The WI has become known as an effective voice for raising issues of national concern, in particular those which affect women. Our current campaigns are on Dental Health Matters and Clean Rivers For People And Wildlife. Locally we support the Women's Refuge and the No Limits charity locally supporting young people. We welcome new members and new ideas, so why not come along and give us a go? Or, if you have a topic you are passionate about or a talent or an interest you would like to share, why not suggest yourself to us as a speaker? We meet in the Residents' Pavilion, Portswood Residents Gardens every fourth Monday of the month (except August) at 8pm. Email: [highfieldwi@gmail.com](mailto:highfieldwi@gmail.com)

Website: <https://wihighfield.wordpress.com/home-2/join-wi/>

We look forward to seeing you soon!

## Did you know .... Spring twitching on the Common

This is a great time of the year to spot birds on the Common, as they return to our shores in early spring. The chiffchaff and blackcap return from more exotic climes but are increasingly spending the winter with us as the climate warms. Listen for the chiffchaff; this tiny bird is named after its sweet song, which has a 'chiffchaff chiffchaff' sound.

Once heard never forgotten.



Photo by Brian Cartwright



Photo of Cherry Laurel by Jodie Hunt on the Little Common

## Good morning HRA

I am seeking some advice and support regarding the invasive species of cherry laurel prius on the Little Common. This is a non-native plant which is very invasive, a fast grower that spreads easily, already darkening the forest floor of our Common. I feel action is urgently needed to start stripping back this species which does not belong here. Right now it's in flower and very easy to spot.

*Jodie Hunt*

### **This helpful response was received from Dawn Bannatyne, Head Ranger SCC**

Yes, Jodie is correct that the Cherry Laurel is not a desirable species (the Victorians liked it a lot hence why it is everywhere). It is invasive, blocks out light and even poisons the ground to prevent growth of other species. Cherry Laurel is typically found throughout woodlands, gardens, parks and is something the Ranger team, along with the Community Campaigns Officer and city-wide volunteers are tackling across the city. It is very difficult to completely eradicate without substantial funding, time and resources. However, significant impact has already been achieved, largely with the help of our wonderful volunteers. Laurel will always remain a target species for the Natural Environment team, and is certainly a favoured task by the volunteers, so rest assured we are doing what we can! Hope that helps.

*Dawn Bannatyne, Lead Ranger SCC*

## Did you know .... the Hawthorns Wildlife Centre is open Sundays 10am - 3pm

Come along and walk around the habitats and enjoy the wonders of Spring coming into bloom! And its FREE! The centre provides information on Southampton's wildlife and how it is managed. The kids will love it! For further information contact us at: [hawthorns@southampton.gov.uk](mailto:hawthorns@southampton.gov.uk)

## Motor Houses - the future?

If you walk around the Oakmount Triangle you will see some garages clearly built at the same time and in the same style as the houses but positioned at the back of the gardens. These are motor houses, built in the early 20th Century. They are of historical and social interest, exemplifying the transition from the Victorian age of horses for transport to the modern motor age. They are a relative rarity around the country, and some elsewhere have been given Grade II listing.

When the John Smith houses of the Oakmount Triangle were built (some pre-WW1 and some in the 1920s), the private motor vehicle was in its infancy. Most of the new residents moving into the Triangle would have travelled via the tram service on The Avenue. However, some would have been wealthy enough to purchase motor cars for their own use.

The motor vehicles of that era were mechanically crude by today's standards. They often failed to start unless they were kept warm and dry, and they were also prone to rusting. A building which housed the newly purchased car was therefore a necessity: they were generally referred to as 'motor houses', whereas the word 'garage' was used mainly for the few commercial premises that catered for motorists.

Pre-WW1 those motor houses that were built from scratch (rather than converted from stables) were often constructed of brick, as in The Triangle. After WW1 prefabricated wooden motor houses became available to buy (see illustration), these ones starting at the princely sum of £15 4s 0d!

In the 20's and 30's there was little of today's infrastructure surrounding motoring. Filling stations were rare and most motorists stored cans of fuel in their motor houses. From a safety point of view, they were often (but not always) built away from the house (also the usual place for the earlier stables), and often had board-covered inspection pits, which enabled the frequent necessary on-site servicing.

*Josie Brown and John Bradshaw*



## Did you know ....

A free 5km parkrun/parkwalk takes place at 9am every Saturday on the Common.

Join in and stay fit this spring! <https://www.parkrun.org.uk/southampton/>

## How to become a member of HRA

SCAN ME



Visit the HRA website: [www.highfieldresidents.org.uk/join-renew/](http://www.highfieldresidents.org.uk/join-renew/)  
Contact: Membership Secretary, 5, Marlborough House, 2A Oakmount Avenue, SO17 1BX email: [HRAmemsec@gmail.com](mailto:HRAmemsec@gmail.com)  
Membership is £10 per household per year - pay on-line by BACS or by cheque or with cash. Completed application forms can be dropped off at Highfield News.



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